



e-LISA Academy – An e-Learning Network for Teachers

e-Lisa academy, the e-learning service of Education Highway, has been offering e-learning within the framework of teachers' education for more than ten years. It has successfully incorporated different learning formats by offering cooperative online-seminars in which communication among participants and individual coaching by qualified trainers synergize. Furthermore, an online course library with more than 70 courses can be accessed at any time for individual studying and thus serve as a platform for either a start-up in e-learning or for consolidating already acquired knowledge. This diverse offer of seminars and courses enables participants to experience the high potentials of e-learning within education at first hand. These potentials include the following:

- "Deliberate" learning: A high degree of written communication strengthens the quality of reflection while simultaneously adapting the speed of the learning process to the learner's individual needs.
- Interconnected and synergized learning: Knowledge and experience are brought together across types of schools, regions and countries. Beyond this continuous exchange participants remain in the e-learning community and continue established collaboration.
- High-quality and internationally-acknowledged learning: The constant evaluation of our seminars and courses reveals a validation between 1,25-1,5 (modelled on the Austrian school grading system). Furthermore, e-LISA academy has established collaborations with institutions for teachers' training in Germany that are working on a permanent incorporation of our cooperative online-seminars in their programme.
- Location- and time-independent learning: Not only does e-learning allow for a high degree of flexibility in terms of place and time but compared to seminars that demand physical attendance, cooperative online-seminars also save costs for, e.g. travelling, accommodation, seminar location and administration.

Seminar- and course offer

e-LISA academy offers three terms of cooperative online-seminars a year. These seminars are scheduled within a fixed time slot that lasts between 2 and 4 weeks, with the exception of one-week online-workshops. They focus on collaborative work



and communication within small groups of up to twelve participants. Trainers provide theoretical and creative input, individual coaching and constant feedback about the individual learning progress. This method is enabled through Moodle – a renowned e-learning platform where these seminars take place. Participation requires online activities (e-tivities) and an individual final project. All successfully completed cooperative online-seminars are credited with a certificate that is accepted by all Austrian pedagogical academies (Pädagogische Hochschulen) for teachers' education.

Our offer ranges from general to subject- or topic-related seminars. E.g., the introductory seminars on how to use Moodle as an educational platform ('Moodlen lernen') focuses on the platform's didactic possibilities for teaching, explaining the intricacies of its tools and offering experimenting space (edulab) where participants create their own online course that can later be used in class by themselves or their colleagues. Whereas courses such as 'Moodlen lernen', 'Hot Potatoes and Moodle', or 'Web 2.0 kennenlernen' draw participants from all school types and fields of teaching, more subject-related courses such as 'Einführung in die Tabellenkalkulation' or 'Sprachunterricht mit Moodle und Web 2.0' allow a collaboration and exchange between teachers from similar teaching fields. Furthermore, e-LISA academy offers seminars on interdisciplinary topics of significant socio-cultural relevance, such as gender and e-learning ('Genderaspekte in Schule und Unterricht – get it started!').

edumoodle: moodle 4 everyone

e-learning and e-teaching is steadily gaining popularity in Austrian schools. This trend is especially made evident by edumoodle, an initiative that has been established by the ministry of education (BMUKK), carried out under the maintenance of education highway and supported by e-LISA academy. So far, more than 1,300 edumoodle instances have been installed and over 200,000 registered users work with edumoodle.

A study on the use and benefits of edumoodle which was carried out in Spring 2008 in cooperation with the University of Vienna reveals that edumoodle is used for a wide range of subjects—the trend shifting away from science towards humanities and language classes in particular. The edumoodle initiative has enabled fast, easy and well-supported access to e-learning and e-teaching for schools and educational



institutions in Austria. It has been extremely well-received, as the ever increasing number of edumoodle instances and users shows.

e-LISA academy Newsletter

Another service that e-LISA academy has successfully implemented is our newsletter which, with the exception of July and August, appears monthly as an online publication and is sent out to more than 16,000 subscribers. It provides the e-learning community with up-to-date information on new trends in e-learning, tips for useful websites, book reviews, etc. and is accompanied by the e-LISA Pod—a podcast that provides audio versions of selected articles and interviews.

We have come a long way...

Over the past ten years more than 10,000 teachers have completed seminars with e-LISA academy. Over these years we have reached a crucial position in the educational landscape for teachers by sustainably integrating the use of the Internet in the classroom. Moreover, e-LISA has collaborated productively and effectively with the ministry of education (BMUKK) and the Pedagogical Academies (Pädagogische Hochschulen). These collaborations have led to, e.g, the establishment of the e-learning platform edumoodle in Austrian schools, innovative educational projects and consulting activities.

The e-learning network of e-LISA academy and its role model position in that educational field has also reached beyond national borders. Both, the Bavarian Academy for teacher's education (bayrische Lehrerfortbildungsakademie) in Dillingen and INTEL-Lehren are working on a permanent incorporation of our cooperative online-seminars in their programme.

The implementation of cooperative online-seminars in teachers' education has not only revolutionized the conducting of seminars but more crucially it has enabled a learning experience that is based on communication and networking and is thus sustainable; to quote a participant: "When I think about the support and help I received from the group I'm very pleased that such great cooperation is possible among colleagues that do not even know each other."